

A-E CONTRACTING BULLETIN 97-06, 17 MAR 97

SUBJECT: Subcontracted Surveying and Mapping Services

1. Reference memorandum, CEMP-EC/CECW-EP, 17 March 1997, subject as above.
2. The subject memorandum has just been signed and distributed to all Directors/Chiefs of Engineering. Please carefully study and follow this guidance when an A-E contract requires subcontracted surveying and mapping services.
3. While the Government does not dictate how a contractor chooses its subcontractors, we may and should strongly encourage contractors to use a qualification-based selection approach (instead of bidding) for selecting subcontractors for surveying, mapping, and other professional A-E services. Also, the contracting officer's consent is required to change any subcontractors or consultants that were specifically identified and agreed to during negotiations (see FAR 52.244-4).

Encl

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CEMP-EC/CECW-EP (715)

17 March 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS,
ATTN: DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL
SERVICES

SUBJECT: Subcontracted Surveying and Mapping Services

1. Due to recent inquiries from several surveying and mapping firms and their industry organizations, we have become aware of a trend for prime architect-engineer (A-E) contractors to use bidding to subcontract for surveying and mapping services. We are very concerned about the potential impacts of this practice on the quality of our products. The purpose of this memorandum is to review the applicable regulations and policies on this issue.
2. The Corps of Engineers is firmly committed to the qualification-based selection (QBS) of firms for A-E services, including surveying and mapping, in accordance with the Brooks A-E Act (40 USC 541-544). Further, 33 USC 569b specifically mandates that USACE will follow the Brooks A-E Act when acquiring surveying and mapping services. (See Engineer Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement 36.601-4(a)(4)(A) for the definition of surveying and mapping services applicable to USACE.)
3. If the contract statement of work requires more than incidental surveying and mapping services, the Commerce Business Daily synopsis must state that the surveying and mapping subcontractor (or the prime contractor's in-house surveying and mapping personnel) will be identified in the Standard Form (SF) 255. The qualifications of the proposed subcontractors (or in-house personnel) are then evaluated as a part of the QBS process. An exception to this procedure would be if the work is over a large area as in a regional indefinite delivery contract. In this case, surveying firms with knowledge of the locality of each task order may be desirable, and the surveying and mapping qualifications would not be requested on the SF 255. Rather, the contractor should be required to submit the qualifications of the subcontractor proposed for each order for review prior to negotiating the order.
4. In either of the above two cases, use the clause at Federal Acquisition Regulation 52.244-4 to require the contracting officer's consent to any change in subcontractors or consultants that were specifically identified and agreed to during negotiations. The contracting officer should refer the qualifications of the surveying and mapping subcontractor to the A-E selection board for evaluation to ensure that the subcontractor has the required technical capabilities. Also, in either case, the subcontractor's price proposal and technical approach should be evaluated during negotiation of the contract or task order.

CEMP-EC/CECW-EP

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5. While the Government does not dictate how a contractor chooses its subcontractors, we may and should strongly encourage contractors to use a QBS approach for selecting subcontractors for surveying, mapping, and other professional A-E services. We should stress to the contractor that we are willing to pay a fair and reasonable price for quality performance, and that bidding of professional subcontracted services could be detrimental to the quality of the work, and hence, the selection of the prime contractor for future work. Also, additional oversight of the subcontractor will likely be required to ensure quality products and services.


6. If a contractor does use price competition in selecting a surveying and mapping subcontractor, more rigorous contractor quality control procedures are needed than normally employed on subcontractors selected by QBS techniques. The contract should require the prime contractor to inspect the aerial photography and stereocompilation work in progress and to independently field test each drawing or map sheet delivered by the subcontractor. In most instances, the increased quality control costs outweigh the apparent savings obtained by competitive bidding.


7. Major surveying and mapping projects covering a large geographic area should not be obtained through a subcontract. Instead, prime contracts that have been specifically awarded by the Government for this type of work should be used. If a local command does not currently have this type of contract capability, or the technical expertise to administer such contracts, support should be sought from other commands or from the Technical Center of Expertise for Photogrammetric Mapping at the St. Louis District.

8. This memorandum has been coordinated with the Office of Counsel and the Office of the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting. Please share this with your project management, contracting, counsel and other concerned offices.

9. Points of contact for this action are Don Evick, CEMP-EC, (202) 761-1053 and Bill Bergen, CECW-EP, (202) 761-1553.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


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